

and how consonant with justice is this relation between master and slave."

I know that this circumspection—this unwillingness to speak out on the part of the Church—has been made a charge against her as a lack on her part of moral courage. But this is a superficial view of the situation. The Church knew her power, but she knew also that she was responsible to God and the world for the peace of the world. And indeed what would have been gained by this "speaking out?" "The assertion of a principle," you say. But surely it is not the assertion of principles that you want, but rather the attainment of them. The Church attained the principles without the assertion of them. What more then can you desire? And what would have been gained by this "assertion of principle?" Nothing would have been gained—everything would have been lost. "Slavery," says Mr. Channing, "had so penetrated society, was so intimately bound up with it, the incentives to servile war were so numerous, that a religion that should have preached liberty to the slave would have shaken the social order to its very foundations." And Mr. Wayland, an American writer, takes the same view. "If the Gospel had forbidden the evil instead of destroying the principle, if it had declared slavery unlawful and taught the slave to resist his oppressors, it would in an instant have divided the civilized world into two parties, mortal enemies to each other; such a preaching would have been the signal for a general servile war." Mr. Wayland might have extended the picture and might have said, such a preaching would have retarded instead of furthering the attainment of the principle, and might have resulted in the total destruction of Christianity itself. For what would have been the result of a general servile war? One of three things could alone have happened; if the masters had been victorious greater severity to the slaves would have been the result. If the slave had been victorious the masters would have been swept from the earth. If neither had been victorious a constant state of war would have obtained, and anarchy and confusion and bloodshed would have sat upon the land. And

where would the principle of civil equality have been all this time? And where would the Church have been, whose mission it was to teach that higher equality—that oneness in Christ, which is the *ne plus ultra* of civil and religious liberty? We have no hesitation in saying that both Church and principle would have so ceased to exist, as to be unknown to the world at the present hour. Did not the Church then act prudently with a divinely directed prudence, when she sought more the attainment of the principle than the enunciation of it?

But if the Church hesitated to declare openly, *ipsissima verba*, the principle of civil and religious equality, she had already established it within her own pale; she had already taught it by the silent tongue of example, and the silent tongue of example is always more effective, we all know, than mere precept. From the first days of Christianity slaves had had accorded them the self-same rights and privileges as their masters; they received the same sacraments, in the same manner, in the same place, and at the same time as their masters; they took part on an equal footing in all religious assemblies; the ranks of the clergy were open to them as easily as to the freeman; they shared alike in that Christian burial in her cemeteries, which the Church gave alike to all, who had been regenerated by the waters of baptism. This is no mere assertion. The Pagan slave was supposed to have no religion. Minutius Felix says that slaves were forbidden to be present at certain religious ceremonies. Cicero accuses Claudius as of a crime, for having allowed slaves to be present at certain games in honor of Juno. In the time of Nero Cassius declared in full Senate that slaves have no religion, unless it be certain foreign superstitions. Seneca describes a slave about to be married to his master's daughter; whose life he had saved at the risk of his own. The whole city is in an uproar; they accuse the master of being crazy. One of the arguments used to deter the marriage is—that a husband ought to divide his hearth and his gods with his wife, but a slave has neither hearth nor gods to divide.

Not so the Christian Church. St. Paul